(a) whether it is a fact that vacancies in different departments of AIIMS are not advertised properly;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the details of methodology of advertising the vacancies of Senior Residents during 2000 in dental department?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) The vacancies of Senior Residents are notified on the Notice Board of various Medical Colleges and major Government Hospitals in Delhi. One post of Senior Resident in the Department of Dental Surgery was notified in the month of August, 2000 and the same was filled up in the month of September, 2000.

Anthrax cases in the country

781. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Anthrax cases do occur in the country and it is not the handiwrok of terrorists and mischief mongers alone;

(b) if so, the details of Anthrax cases in the country during the last three years, year-wise and State / UT-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to combat bio-terrorism using Anthrax bacteria in the country, particularly in National Capital and Southern parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) Natural anthrax is endemic in some parts of the country. The data available with National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) is given below:

States	1999		2000		2001	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
Karnataka	8	5	Nil		4	2
West Bengal	Nil		43	3	Nil	

(c) A Statement is attached *(See* below*)*

Statement

Action taken by Government to combat Bio-Terrorism using Anthrax Bacteria in the country

(i) A detailed list of biological and chemical agents used as weapons prepared by the Indian Council of Medical Research alongwith signs and symptoms, likely methods of dissemination, incubation period, lethality and the availability of vaccines, anti-microbial therapy and treatment has been circulated to all the States and Union Territories and Central Government hospitals in order to take precautionary steps such as earmarking of maximum number of beds for emergency contingency, stocking of vaccines / sera / drugs to the extent possible, setting up a special team of doctors for coordinated action and sensitise them on the impact of such weapons and treatment measures.

(ii) A national workshop was conducted at the NICD in September 2001 for developing surveillance mechanism for pathogens with biological warfare potential including that of anthrax.

(iii) An issue of CD alert (monthly Newsletter of NICD) on bio-terrorism with special reference to anthrax was circulated in October, 2001 to all the concerned health authorities in different States and Union Territories. The issue also covered the guidelines to be followed during biological war/terrorism and effective handling of auspicious envelops / packages.

(iv) Guidelines for packaging transportation of clinical specimens and processing protocal in laboratories were circulated to all the Medical Colleges in the country.

(v) A meeting on chemical and bio-terrorism was organized on 29th October by the Department of Health which was participated by the Secretaries of Home and Health, Director of Health Services from various States / Union Territories. The representatives from the States informed the preparatory measures taken by them and assured availability of drugs in adequate quantity to tackle any situation.

(vi) National Institute for Communicable Diseases, Delhi has been identified as the nodal agency for investigations of any specimen suspected for anthrax.

(vii) A round the clock control room is functioning at NICD from 19th October, 2001 where suspected envelops/packages are being received for tests.

Life Saving treatment for the poor

782. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that because of the prohibitive cost of cancer treatment, poor patients have to forgo life saving surgery or treatment;

(b) whether according to a study only 50 per cent of the patients are able to afford life saving treatment while the balance are left to die; and

(c) if so, the action Government are taking to ensure that life saving treatment is available to the poor who are unable to pay the cost of medicines and treatment of diseases like cancer, kidney failure etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) and (b) No data is available on treatment of cancers according to socio-economic status. The major modalities of treatment of cancer include surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. However, the most cost-effective method is prevention and early detection of cancer.

(c) In the Government Hospitals/Medical Colleges/Government supported Regional Cancer Centres, a large number of poor patients are either being treated free of cost or at nominal charges for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures involved in cancer treatment.

In addition to above this Ministry has a scheme namely National Illness Assistance Fund under which financial assistance is provided to people living below the poverty line suffering from serious diseases such as Cancer, Cardiac problems. Renal Disorders or other such diseases.

Vacancies of Senior Residents in Dental and Neurology Departments of AIIMS

783. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of vacancies of Senior Residents in Dental and Neurology Departments of AIIMS as on 1st October, 2001;